



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**BRADLEY J. SCHLOZMAN**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **CHICAGO MAN SENTENCED FOR ID THEFT RELATED TO WESTERN UNION FRAUD**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Bradley J. Schlozman, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Chicago, Ill., man was sentenced in federal court today for participating in a wire fraud conspiracy that resulted in an intended loss of more than \$400,000 to more than 50 victims in 17 states. The conspiracy consisted of stealing the identities of victims and using their credit card information to receive money wired by Western Union.

“Identity theft threatens private citizens and businesses alike, but this case illustrates how we can work together to deter and prevent it,” Schlozman said. “Our prosecution was bolstered by the cooperation of corporate representatives from Western Union, CitiBank and AT&T, each of whom assisted investigators and testified in court. Working alongside good corporate citizens is essential to our effort to stop identity thieves.”

Schlozman noted that President Bush launched the nation’s first Identity Theft Task Force this week to marshal the resources of the federal government to crack down on the criminals who traffic in stolen identities and protect American families from this devastating crime. “We need this two-pronged approach,” Schlozman said, “both aggressively investigating and prosecuting identity thieves, and educating consumers and businesses on ways they can protect themselves.”

**Bryan C. Barnett**, 29, of Chicago, Ill., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Howard F. Sachs this afternoon to 10 years in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Barnett** to pay \$126,180 in restitution, which represents the amount of actual loss to his victims.

On Aug. 29, 2005, **Barnett** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and to wire fraud.

Co-defendant **Douglass Patterson**, 53, of Detroit, Mich., pleaded guilty to the same

charges on Sept. 2, 2005, and awaits sentencing.

**Barnett** and **Patterson** admitted that they targeted Citibank credit card holders and Western Union agents. When targeting individual card holders, Schlozman explained, **Barnett** would call Western Union posing as the credit card holder and request a money transfer. Prior to making this call, **Barnett** used his extensive knowledge of how the telecommunications network operated to have the victim's home telephone line forwarded to a location where he could pose as the victim card holder when Western Union called back to verify the wire transfer.

When targeting businesses that served as Western Union agents, Schlozman explained, **Barnett** would call Western Union posing as an employee of a Western Union agent. They would then initiate a fraudulent and fictitious wire transfer that would be picked up by either **Barnett** or **Patterson**.

To facilitate the scheme, Schlozman added, **Barnett** sometimes posed as a "fraud early warning" employee of the Citibank credit card company in order to obtain information on true Citibank credit card holders. At other times, they posed as various Citibank credit card holders requesting a money transfer that would be charged to their Citibank credit card. At still other times, they posed as a Western Union employee who was contacting a business regarding a particular Western Union account.

For example, Schlozman said, **Barnett** called Western Union on March 28, 2003, posing as a Lee's Summit, Mo., man. **Barnett** requested a \$4,500 wire transfer with **Patterson** as the payee. This wire transfer was completed, and **Patterson** picked up the money orders in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The victim's credit card was charged \$4,720 (the amount of the transfer plus Western Union's fee of \$220). Furthermore, Schlozman said, an examination of the victim's telephone records indicates that his home telephone had call forwarding added to the line and any calls received were forwarded to another number.

In another instance, **Barnett** called Western Union on April 4, 2003, posing as a Pleasant Hill, Mo., man and requested a \$3,600 wire transfer with **Patterson** as the payee. This wire transfer was completed, and **Patterson** picked up the money orders in Chicago. The victim's credit card was charged \$3,800 (the amount of the transfer plus Western Union's fee of \$200). Again, Schlozman said, an examination of the victim's telephone records indicates that his home telephone had call forwarding added to the line and any calls received were forwarded to another number.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David M. Ketchmark and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Matt P. Wolesky. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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